



Beaver County Emergency Services

Quarterly Newsletter - Volume 4, Issue 1

TABLETOPS PLANNED FOR 2009

By Victor Spinelli & Schuyler Mu

Beginning in December of 2008 and running through 2009, Beaver County will be organizing monthly tabletop exercises centered on school violence and transportation incident scenarios.

School violence is a threat that all education institutes must prepare for, and the county intends to bring focus back to this issue by exercising school emergency plans through tabletop exercises. County staff members are currently reaching out to the county's superintendents to schedule exercises at their earliest convenience. These tabletops will ask school officials, county and local responders, as well as the county's Emergency Services Unit, to work out a coordinated response solution to a realistic school violence threat.

Bomb threats and subsequent bridge closures during 2008 taxed local resources and emphasized the need for further emergency planning in regards to traffic detours and pre-designated evacuation routes in Beaver County. The first of many transportation tabletop exercises was held in September.



VICTOR SPINELLI AND ERIC BREWER LEAD A TRANSPORTATION TABLETOP EXERCISE ON SEPTEMBER 25, 2008 AT THE EMERGENCY SERVICES CENTER.

WINTER, 2008-2009

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top exercises was held in September. The exercise focused on the area of Route 65 in East Rochester Borough, and called on public safety agencies from East Rochester and its surrounding municipalities to walk through their reactions to a heavy rain and subsequent transportation incident in their area. In addition to county and local officials, representatives from the State Police, PennDot, and the PA Department of Environmental Protection were in attendance. In 2009, the county hopes to involve all municipalities in similar exercises with scenarios written specifically for their communities.

As with all training, the goal of these exercises is to bring responders together for thought provoking discussion regarding mitigation and response *before* an incident occurs.

For more information regarding upcoming school violence and transportation tabletop exercises, as well as for additional information on other county training activities, please contact Victor Spinelli at 724-775-1700.

THE DIRECTOR'S CORNER By Wesley Hill

I would like to first wish everyone a happy and safe holiday season. My hopes are that everyone enjoyed Thanksgiving with their families and friends.

A lot has happened since we last talked. The final decision was made to move forward with the new Emergency Services Center which will be located in Ambridge. This will be a state of the art operations center and one that everyone will be proud of. As we all know, the financial world is not in the best of shape. However, a new operations center is of utmost need and will be of benefit to our entire community. I would like to personally thank the Beaver County Board of Commissioners for their time and determination to make this project a reality. The official groundbreaking is scheduled for December 12th at 9 AM at the Ambridge site. If you are available, please stop by and join us for this special event.

The county's communications system continues to progress with enhancements almost weekly. Some may say they don't see it, but, believe me, once the whole project is tied together, it will be one you all will enjoy working with and hopefully one that we will continue to build upon. However, with technological updates

comes training. Please expect an adjustment period and be patient through the growing pains we are bound to experience. As I stated, the system continues to build, but we all must understand it in order for it to work to its full capability. I will continue to advise you as this communications upgrade progresses.

As mentioned in the past, funds were obtained from both the Commonwealth and the County to design and build a GIS mapping system. I am happy to say that we are nearing the end of the initial phase to make this happen. The county's Planning Commission, Assessment Office, and the Emergency Services Center are now working together to make sure that the base line project is where it needs to be. The Commissioners are anxiously awaiting the initial phase of the project to be completed and available for use. This has been a long process and will be a benefit to all who use it. My hopes would be that sometime during the first quarter of 2009 this also will be a reality.

Our daily lives continue to change. All of us need to be prepared. During 2008, we have seen severe weather, large fires, and many calls for service for both law enforcement and emergency medical ser-

vices. Once again, our responders were blessed in that all of those who responded returned home. Who knows what 2009 will bring in terms of incidents and responses, but I am sure you will all be prepared and ready to respond in what ever way you would be requested.

2009 looks to be more demanding than ever. With construction of the new facility and ongoing maintenance of the current one, the ESC staff will be busy. Our goals for the New Year also include a lot of planning and training for the county's emergency response agencies, schools and businesses.

In closing, I would ask all of you to take some extra time this holiday season to relax and enjoy the company of your family and friends. Be thankful and think of those who are less fortunate. Remember that for many of our troops, their holidays will still be spent far from home. They may wish they could be where we are, but instead, they have chosen to protect us and support our great nation.

Once again, I would like to take this opportunity to wish you all a safe and happy holiday season and a prosperous new year... *Wes*

ROBBERIES FOILED!

By Kevin Joy

Almost every day, when you turn on the nightly news, you will see another bank being robbed. The story usually ends with a partial description of the suspect, possibly a vehicle description, and the final request from the newscaster that you call if you have any additional information. Well, that has not been the case recently in Beaver County.

On two occasions, over the last several months, Beaver County's 9-1-1 Center was involved in the apprehension of two separate, would-be robbers. Back on August 14th, at 15:04 hours, Beaver County 9-1-1 received a bank alarm at the ESB Bank in Center Township. Within minutes, the phone lit up confirming that this was an actual alarm. Subsequent calls were received giving officers additional information about the suspects. First arriving officers also provided additional information about the suspects and their vehicle. All police agencies in Beaver County were notified along with the State Police, FBI, and Hancock County Sheriff's Office. At 15:29, Aliquippa Police had the suspected vehicle stopped and the subjects in custody.

Then, on September 26th, another would-be robbery occurred. At 12:04, a call was received from the Friendly Federal Credit Union in Aliquippa. They stated they had just been robbed. The teller then provided a description and direction of travel for the suspect. Several more citizens placed calls to the 9-1-1 Center to provide additional information. By 12:09, the suspect was in custody.

SAFETY VEST REQUIREMENT By Eric Brewer

On November 24, 2008, a provision in the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control (MUTCD), administered by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), went into effect requiring public safety officers, including volunteer firefighters and EMS personnel responding to an incident on the side of a federal aid highway, to wear a safety vest that meets the Performance Class II or III requirements of the American National Standards Institute/International Safety Equipment Association (ANSI/ISEA) 107-2004 publication.

Minimum requirements for ANSI/ISEA compliant garments include use of fluorescent yellow-green, orange-red, or red background material with 360-degree retroreflective visibility. Garments should be labeled as compliant with ANSI/ISEA 107-2004 or ANSI/ISEA 207-2006. Many volunteer agencies are already using these garments which have been on the market for several years.

Firefighters directly engaged in fire suppression should not wear safety vests as they could catch on fire and/or melt if exposed to flame. In July, the National Volunteer Fire Council (NVFC) submitted public comment to FHWA requesting that an allowance be made for firefighters exposed to fire or flame in accordance with National Fire Protection Standards.

The FHWA rule applies only to responses on federal aid highways, but the NVFC recommends that volunteer firefighters and EMS personnel responding to any roadside incident wear MUTCD-approved safety vests. While there is no federal funding set aside specifically to help local agencies purchase safety vests, there are several grant programs, including the Assistance to Firefighters Grant program, which offer funding that could be used by volunteer fire and EMS departments to purchase safety vests.

ANIMAL PLANNING By Debbie Miketa

One of the abiding images of hurricane Katrina was that of a small dog being torn from the arms of an equally small boy by a rescue worker, to be left behind. It is difficult to know who was most traumatized, the boy, the dog or the millions of Americans who tried to digest the scene over dinner.

Many people consider their pets to be members of the family, so it is important for planners to consider the human-animal bond when planning for emergencies; for example, if the emergency warrants an evacuation, many people will not evacuate without their animals, or will delay their own evacuation in an attempt to make preparations for their animals left behind (livestock and companion animals), to their own detriment.

These refusals or delays begin a chain reaction which can seriously jeopardize or cause a total breakdown of the overall disaster plan.

For this reason, Beaver County is attempting to develop a Beaver County Animal Disaster Plan. This plan will help outline procedures for caring for companion and livestock animals during emergencies.

If you have animals in your household, one important step that you can take to prepare for an emergency involves developing a Pet Care Emergency Kit. Make sure that you have at least three (3) days of food and water. Keep extra medicines, if your pet takes any on a regular basis, back up collars and tags, in case they get lost, crates or other pet carriers, and

last but not least, something to help provide for your pet's sanitation needs.

With these simple preparations, you can be ready for the unexpected. Those who take the time to prepare themselves and their pets will likely encounter less difficulty, stress, and worry. Take the time now to get yourself and your pet ready.

For more information about how to prepare, visit www.ready.gov or call 1-800-BE-READY.





EMS UPDATES

By Eric Brewer,
Beaver County
EMS Coordinator



- Congratulations to **Patrick Sherin of Medic Rescue**. Pat was the recipient of the **Jerry Esposito Award** at EMSI's Annual Dinner Meeting on November 14th. The award is to show dedication and advancement of EMS in the region. Pat is the general manager of Medic Rescue.
- **Carbon Monoxide detectors**, which were purchased through EMSI, were recently distributed to the ambulance services to be placed on the first in bags. The C.O. detectors are for the safety of the crew in case they would be treating a patient in an atmosphere containing C.O. Usually, EMS is not alerted to a C.O. problem unless the fire department is on scene or until after the patient arrives at the hospital and blood gases are obtained.
- Look for the county to host a **tabletop focused on the EMS community** after the beginning of the year. Using tabletop drills, trainers hope to put responders in situations that they may face on actual calls and to prepare them with what resources are available to them in a time of need.
- If you have a problem with a **landing zone**, whether it be with the coordinates or a mix up on a call, please let me know. I am going to be coordinating with Lifelight and Stat on updating landing zones so that all 3 agencies are on the same page.
- **EMSOF Dates**
 - ◇ All approved purchases must be completed no later than January 30, 2009
 - ◇ Copies of invoices must be submitted to EMSI no later than February 27, 2009
 - ◇ Cancelled checks must be submitted to EMSI no later than May 29, 2009
- **Act 66 - Volunteer Responder State Income Tax Credit and Point System Outline:** On July 9, 2008, the Governor signed into law Act 66 (House Bill 377), which amended the Tax Reform Code of 1971. This provides for a volunteer responder retention and recruitment tax credit against the volunteer responder's State income tax liability. The tax credit must be earned in 2008, but may be applied against the volunteer responder's State income tax liability for not only 2008, but also against the State income tax liability for three succeeding taxable years, until the tax credit has been exhausted. The maximum amount of the tax credit is \$100. To qualify for the tax credit the volunteer responder must earn the number of points jointly prescribed by the State Fire Commissioner and the Director of the Bureau of Emergency Medical Services in the Department of Health to be certified as an active volunteer. The Commissioner and the Director will provide the details of the identified point system in the near future, and its details will be widely distributed to the emergency services community when available.



FIRE SERVICES UPDATES

By David Trzcianka



- An email was sent out on October 8th to all Fire Departments regarding **Radio Identifiers**. As of this date, only 3 departments have replied with the requested information. We would like to have this information *as soon as possible*. If you did not receive the email or if it has been misplaced, email me (address below), and I will send out a new form.
- As noted earlier in this newsletter, as of November 24, 2008, all emergency personnel that are working incidents on Federally funded highways are reminded that all personnel must have **ANSI Class 2 or 3 high visibility safety apparel** on while working on or in close proximity to the highway. The only exceptions at this time are for police if the vest would make the officer stand out in a potentially confrontational incident and for firefighters who are actively engaged in fighting a fire. The following link has the entire law with additional information and related links: https://www.rkb.mipt.org/contentdetail.cfm?content_id=200622
- Just a heads up that the Police Departments are experimenting with **4 digit radio ID numbers**, and they are based on Fire Department numbers. Fire Personnel would use numbers 00 thru 49, and Police Officers will be assigned 50 thru 89 with the numbers 90 thru 99 being reserved for Fire Police. For example, Baden PD would be 4750 and up; Brighton Township PD is 6350 and up. Should the county choose to proceed with this system, this change will occur in small groups on each zone a little at a time until all Police Departments are switched over.
- With a new 911 Center being built comes a **new CAD system** which should benefit the fire services in the county greatly. We will now be able to build run cards based on each Fire Department's needs. Examples include being able to have mutual aid on automatic response at certain times. Responses can be based on unit needed such as just a Rescue, Ladder, or an Engine without having the entire station respond. Run cards will be able to be built using first alarm, second alarm and such. The CAD will also automatically add units if one is marked out of service for any reason.
- The county is in the process of rebuilding the **Tanker Task Forces** like the county had years ago, information on this will be forthcoming.
- Also, since we have **multiple channels** now available for the Fire Departments, we are going to start moving incidents off dispatch as soon as possible to keep the dispatch channel clear.
- Finally, a reminder that **Beaver County Fire Association** meetings are held the 2nd Wednesday of each month at 7 PM at the Hazmat garage on Route 51.

NEWS & NOTES

- The final 2008 quarterly training for **Beaver County Municipal Emergency Management Coordinators** was held on October 21st. Wesley Hill and Kevin Joy provided Coordinators and their assistants with information regarding Senate Bill 1225, which addresses mutual aid agreements in the Commonwealth. Additionally, they reviewed the response and recovery efforts that followed the September 14th wind storm. A NIMS refresher was offered as well as preliminary information on BVPS' upcoming Hostile Action Exercise. Over 20 coordinators and assistants attended. Those who were unable to attend but would like more information regarding any of the above are asked to contact Kevin at 724-775-1700.
- Congratulations are due to the following Beaver County 9-1-1 Dispatchers who recently completed training to serve as shift **Crew Chiefs**: Ed Clark, Tina Hrubovcak, Frank Parris, Brent Peacock, and Nick Sheleheda.
- Look for the following important mailings in the next few months:
 - ◊ **Special Needs and Farmer's Needs Cards** will be issued to all county mailing addresses soon. Please encourage your friends, family, and neighbors to complete and return a card if they have special medical concerns and/or may need transportation or special attention during an incident or evacuation. The information provided is for emergency responder use only and is kept confidential. Farmer's Needs cards should be completed by individuals and businesses that maintain working or hobby farms. This information is used by the county's agriculture extension office during disasters to protect crops, food, and livestock as necessary. Please take the time to read the Special Needs mailing and spread the word regarding this valuable public safety tool.
 - ◊ Emergency Services will begin their **annual resource and notification updates** soon. Local responders, Municipal Coordinators, Emergency Operations Center staff, and others affiliated with public safety in Beaver County may receive a phone call or a letter from our office in early 2009. We are specifically in need of email addresses and cell phone numbers to achieve a greater degree of effectiveness in our existing notification procedures.
- Gene Miketa, the county's Region 13 Task Force equipment coordinator reports that the county has received several **new pieces of emergency response equipment** from the Task Force. In November, Emergency Services took ownership of a Williams Foam trailer containing a pre-piped, 1500gpm, deck mounted foam nozzle, a 1000gpm deck monitor, and two 2-1/2 inch foam hand line inductors as well as various NST fittings. The unit also came with AFFF foam totes and a foam pump for loading and unloading purposes. Training on the new unit has been scheduled at Butler County Fire Training on December 6, 2008. Also in November, the county received four 300 gallon Water Buffalo units. Each unit includes four garden hose sized outlets.
- Several members from Beaver County Emergency Services took time out of their schedules to help a family outside of Beaver County. On Monday, October 20th they ventured to Penn Hills to be part of "**Extreme Home Makeover: Home Addition**". The eight people involved were Wes Hill, Kevin Joy, Gene Miketa, Skip Mattern, Jeff Bolland, Debbie Miketa, Dave Trzcianka, and Justin Miketa. They were involved in a variety of tasks that included running a Bobcat, checking in of volunteers and contractors, carrying supplies, and cleaning the street. They also had the opportunity to be within a few feet of some of the stars of the show that include Ty Pennington and Paige Hennis. The show from Penn Hills is set to air on January 4, 2009.
- **American Messaging Paging** has limited their representative's site visits. For service issues, including pager replacements, please access your paging account online or contact customer service at 888-223-4123. For sales or account issues, Mary Rosenberg can be reached at 330-215-2294.



THE EMERGENCY SERVICES TEAM WITH A CREW MEMBER ON THE SET OF "EXTREME HOME MAKEOVER" IN PENN HILLS.

DECEMBER 2008

Su	M	Tu	We	Th	Fri	Sat
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

- **5th:** Support County Lunch, Noon, Thursday's Restaurant, Bridge-water Borough
- **10th & 11th:** PEMA Quarterly Training, Indiana, PA
- **12th:** Emergency Services Groundbreaking, 9 AM, Ambridge Bor-ough
- **17th:** Midland School District Tabletop, 10 AM - Noon, Midland Ele-mentary
- **17th:** Hazmat Refresher Training for Law Enforcement, 1 PM, Hazmat Garage
- **19th:** Emergency Services Christmas Party, Noon - 4 PM
- **21st:** United Valley REACT, 6 PM
- **25th - 26th:** Christmas Holiday, County offices closed

JANUARY 2009

Su	M	Tu	We	Th	Fri	Sat
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4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

- **1st:** New Year's Day, County offices closed
- **7th:** Hazmat Team 700 Training, 6:30 PM, Garage
- **13th:** Ambridge School District Tabletop, 10 AM - Noon, Ambridge High School
- **14th:** VOAD Meeting, 1 PM
- **14th:** LEPC Meeting, 2:30 PM
- **14th:** Firefighter's Association Meeting, 7 PM, Hazmat Garage
- **19th:** Martin Luther King, Jr. Day, County offices closed
- **21st:** Chiefs of Police Meeting, Noon, J.W. Halls
- **21st:** Hazmat Team 700 Training, 6:30 PM, Garage
- **28th:** Public Safety Commission Meeting, 7 PM
- **30th:** Western Area 9-1-1 Users Group, 10 AM, Cambria County

FEBRUARY 2009

Su	M	Tu	We	Th	Fri	Sat
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28

- **4th:** Hazmat Team 700 Training, 6:30 PM, Garage
- **11th:** Firefighter's Association Meeting, 7 PM, Hazmat Garage
- **16th:** President's Day, County offices closed
- **18th - 19th:** PEMA Quarterly Training, Location TBD
- **18th:** Chiefs of Police Meeting, Noon, Location TBD
- **18th:** Hazmat Team 700 Training, 6:30 PM, Garage
- **25th:** Public Safety Commission Meeting, 7 PM

ALL EVENTS LOCATED AT THE BEAVER COUNTY EMERGENCY SERVICES CENTER, UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED

Please join us on Friday,
December 19, 2008
from Noon to 4 PM



for Beaver County
Emergency Services'
Annual Christmas Party

250 EAST END AVENUE, BEAVER, PA 15009, 724-775-1700



EMERGENCY SERVICES

250 East End Avenue
Beaver, PA 15009
724-775-1700

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Want to contribute?
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The Beaver County Emergency Services Newsletter is created and published by the Beaver County Emergency Services Center (BCESC).

The BCESC is a division of Beaver County government, under the authority of the Beaver County Board of Commissioners. The BCESC manages the county's 9-1-1 dispatch operations center and also serves as the county's Emergency Management office, working under the direction of the Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency (PEMA) on emergency preparedness, planning, mitigation, response, and recovery. The BCESC is also the home of the county's Hazmat Team 700, the Public Safety Commission, the Local Emergency Planning Commission (LEPC), and is the contact point for many other public safety organizations, including EMS, Fire, Police, and Municipal EMA services.

The BCESC works in conjunction with a number of county and offsite agencies to provide comprehensive public safety guidance and emergency support to the residents and businesses of Beaver County.

Beaver County Emergency Services
250 East End Avenue
Beaver, PA 15009

